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# THE WIMAN CONSPIRACY UNMASKED.

BY SIR CHARLES TUPPER.

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DURING the last four years Mr. Erastus Wiman, a Canadian by birth, living in New York for twenty-six years, and claiming to be a British subject still, has conducted an active campaign, both in the United States and Canada, with the avowed object of bringing about complete free trade between those two countries.

The Hon. Mr. Laurier, the leader of the opposition in the Canadian House of Commons ; Sir Richard Cartwright, who held the office of Finance Minister in Mr. McKenzie's administration from 1873 to 1878 ; and Mr. Edward Farrer, the principal writer on *The Globe* newspaper, the organ of the opposition, have been vigorously coöperating with Mr. Wiman, in the press of the United States and Canada and at public meetings and banquets in both countries, in an endeavor to excite the hostility of the administration, Congress, and the people of the United States against the Liberal Conservative government and party of Canada, and to show that the opposition have been the friends of the United States, and are now prepared to establish free trade between the two countries.

In the January number of *THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW* Mr. Wiman says :

“ A condition of commercial belligerency exists along the entire northern border of the United States. . . .

“ Whatever may have been the motive, or whatever may be the outcome, the policy of the Tory party has certainly been in the direction of isolation. To this must be attributed the harsh and antiquated interpretation of the fishery treaty—the refusal of hospitality to a few fishing-smacks in Canadian ports, while enjoying an unbounded hospitality for British and Canadian ships in every port of the United States. To this policy must be credited the denial of bonding privileges for a few quintals of fish, while enjoying unlimited bonding privileges from the United States, without which Canadian railroads would rapidly reach bankruptcy. The same idea prevails in the discrimination against United States vessels in the canals, the creation of which

was only justified by the patronage of these craft. . . . This catalogue of Tory achievements, supplemented by the guerrilla railroad warfare which, owing to the enforcement of the United States inter-State regulations, threatens to ruin American railway investments, and which the Canadian government is accused of encouraging, makes the indictment complete. . . .

"What, therefore, under the circumstances is the best plan by which to abate the commercial belligerency that prevails along the northern border of the United States? If the people in this country cannot conquer, cannot purchase, and cannot lure to a political alliance the people of Canada, can a commercial bargain be made with them by which free access can be had to their sources of enormous wealth, and to the profits of a trade that their development will create? The answer is that nothing is easier of accomplishment than this commercial bargain. . . .

"It is most important, at this juncture, that the results of a Liberal victory should be perfectly understood. In the first place, the Liberal party are unequivocally committed to the principle of unrestricted reciprocity with the United States. . . .

"Again, unrestricted reciprocity with the United States implies that American goods are not only to be admitted free of duty, but for the purposes of revenue, and to prevent Canada from being the back door of smugglers into the United States, the duty on foreign goods will be maintained at the present rates. . . . Thus there is proposed a discrimination in favor of American manufactures, which are to be admitted free, while British goods are practically prohibited by the exaction of a duty.

"Is it possible to conceive of a movement more significant in British North America than this attempt at fiscal freedom from British control? . . .

"That the people of Canada will consent to this arrangement there can be little doubt, especially since the agricultural section of the McKinley Bill has afforded an object-lesson of such stupendous import as to perfectly convince them that the commercial hostility heretofore indulged in can have but one result—that of complete isolation, loss, and disaster to the most important interests of the Dominion."

It may be added that Mr. Wiman has persistently denounced the Reciprocity Act of 1854 on the ground that it was unfair to the United States.

Sir Richard Cartwright has joined Mr. Wiman in denouncing the government for hostility to the United States, and in declaring their determination to secure unrestricted reciprocity with that country.

Mr. Laurier, at a public meeting at St. Hyacinthe, asserted: "The Conservative party has always shown itself hostile to the United States."

At Montreal on January 27, 1891, Mr. Laurier said: "Our relations with the United States are unworthy of a civilized country. We have not only not free commercial intercourse, but everything possible has been done by the government at Ottawa

to render our relations with our neighbors disagreeable. In the future I wish it to be understood that there is in this country a political party well disposed to friendly intercourse with the Americans."

At a recent public meeting at St. Thomas he said :

"The President only asks to retaliate. Why retaliate ? Why, sir, because in his judgment he would be compelled to do so by the unfriendly action of the Canadian government. If we are met with this state of things with which we are threatened, it is due to the vicious policy of the Canadian government in the administration of the rights secured to us by the treaty of 1818."

Mr. Wiman's charge of commercial belligerency is controverted by the fact that the tariff of Canada only averages about one-half of that of the United States. The public records of Canada effectually disprove the statement that the Liberal Conservative government of Canada has been unfriendly to the United States.

The Right Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald, the present Premier, was a member of the government that obtained the ratification of the treaty of 1854.

Under that treaty an enormous expansion took place in the trade between the United States and Canada. It was denounced by the United States, and terminated in 1866, although the balance of trade during its operation was no less than \$95,575,957 in favor of the United States, in addition to their use of the fisheries of British North America.

Mr. Wiman, nevertheless, denounces that treaty as "a juggled policy" which should not be renewed by the United States.

On the 5th February last Mr. McCreary, a distinguished member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, said in Congress, as reported in *The Congressional Record*: "Bound together as this nation and Canada are by race, language, tradition, and similar institutions, with Canadian territory running hundreds of miles into the United States, and the United States territory running hundreds of miles around Canada, with great transcontinental lines of railway connecting and cementing the two countries, it is difficult now to understand why the reciprocity treaty between the United States and Canada should have been terminated in 1866. Canada is a grand market for our products, and a magnificent source of supply."

The government of Sir John A. Macdonald, in its great desire to avoid the interruption of the harmonious relations that had grown up under the operation of that treaty, allowed the fishermen of the United States the free use of our fisheries for a year after Canadian fish were compelled by the United States to pay duty.

Sir John A. Macdonald was one of Her Britannic Majesty's Joint High Commissioners who negotiated the treaty of Washington in 1871, which settled the "Alabama" claims and all questions then pending between the United States and Canada.

On submitting that treaty for the approval of the House of Commons, he was attacked by the so-called Liberal party, and charged with basely sacrificing the rights of Canada in his desire to promote friendly relations with the great republic.

Through that spirit which has always actuated his government, the American fishermen were allowed to enjoy the privileges accorded by the treaty for three months before it came into operation. When, twelve years afterwards, it was terminated by the United States, their fishermen were allowed to continue to enjoy our fisheries, without any consideration, for a full season.

Although Canada was then compelled to protect her rights under the treaty of 1818, upon which we were thrown back by the action of the United States, the following article from the *Toronto Globe*, the organ of the opposition, will show the spirit in which it was done :

"As their Congress refused to consent to the President's recommendation to nominate an international fisheries commission, there was no escape for Canada from the conclusion that the United States would not deal on the matter. Hence Canada had no option but to give up just as much as the Americans chose to take or to protect practically. Our complaint against the Ottawa ministers is that they did not protect the fisheries more completely."—*Globe* editorial, March 3, 1887.

When I had the honor, as one of Her Majesty's plenipotentiaries, to assist in the negotiation of the Washington treaty of 1888, we agreed to a treaty which President Cleveland declared was a fair and just settlement, and recommended its ratification. He thanked the British plenipotentiaries warmly for the *modus vivendi* voluntarily offered by us, under which all friction in reference to the Atlantic fisheries was removed.

President Harrison expressed in his inaugural address approval of that measure.

When, however, I submitted that treaty and *modus vivendi* to the House of Commons, I was fiercely denounced by Mr. Laurier, Sir Richard Cartwright, and other members of the Liberal party, for having surrendered everything in my desire to obtain friendly relations with the United States.

These are the evidences to be found on the public records of the country of the real attitude of the two parties in Canada towards our neighbors. How ill informed Mr. Wiman is when he undertakes to instruct the people of the United States and Canada may be learned by the perusal of his sworn testimony before the committee of the Senate appointed July 31, 1888, where he stated that American vessels had taken out 500 licenses each year under the *modus vivendi*, and that those licenses gave them power to catch bait and fish—the fact being that the largest number of licenses taken out in Canada in any one year was 119, and that they gave no power to catch bait or fish!

Again, Mr. Wiman has endeavored to excite hostility in the United States by charging the Canadian government with discriminating against American vessels using our canals. No such discrimination exists. Canada has expended \$41,000,000 on the canals from Lake Erie to Montreal, and is now expending \$12-000,000 more to complete a fourteen-foot navigation throughout. Of this, \$24,000,000 have been spent on the Welland Canal. Of the 1,104,553 tons of freight which passed through that canal in 1889-90, more than eleven-twelfths came from or was going to United States ports. All vessels coming from and going to the same ports pay the same tolls on our canals, whatever their nationality may be.

The assistance given by the Canadian government to railways has never been in any spirit of hostility to the United States, but simply as a means of developing Canada. The manner in which Mr. Wiman gloats over the McKinley Bill as a great object-lesson to aid in "The Capture of Canada" leaves no room to doubt that this measure, so far as it affects Canada, was prompted by Mr. Wiman and his associates, Sir R. Cartwright and Mr. Farrer. True to their vocation of preventing good feeling between the United States and Canada from being brought about by any reciprocal-trade arrangement between the two countries, they endeavored to paralyze the Canadian government in any negotiations with the United States by the declaration that they would be swept from

power by the voice of the people in twelve months. Sir John A. Macdonald, seeing the injury that such a statement would inflict upon any negotiations at Washington, promptly remitted that question to the people at the polls. Brought face to face with the people, Mr. Wiman was at once discarded by his associates, Mr. Laurier and Sir R. Cartwright, who declared against the adoption of the United States tariff. Mr. Laurier's address to the electors and country contained these words: "Moreover, the assertion that unrestricted reciprocity means discrimination against England involves the proposition that the Canadian tariff would have to be assimilated to the American tariff. I deny the proposition." The organ of the opposition in Nova Scotia took the same ground as did Sir R. Cartwright and the party generally. The New York *Tribune* at once denounced the position taken by Mr. Laurier and his party in the following terms:

"It [the *Halifax Morning Chronicle*] argues in favor of unrestricted and absolute reciprocity between Canada and the United States, with each country at liberty to adopt such tariff as it may prefer, and represents this, and no more than this, as the deliberate purpose of one party in the Canadian contest. If this is the fact, one party of Canadians closely resemble the baby which cried for the moon and got into a rage because the moon would not consent to be grasped. This nation has not the slightest notion of allowing Canada to open the back door as wide as it may please, while tariff enactments by the United States are closing the front door against sundry importations at New York and Boston. If any one is silly enough to suppose such a plan is entertained by Americans, he does not live in this country. All such representations may as well be put aside as utterly and widely at variance with anything Americans can possibly be brought to adopt."

Yet the country has witnessed the singular spectacle of Mr. Wiman, thus thrown over, apparently, and discredited by all his associates except Mr. Farrer, devoting all his time and energies to lobbying Congress, begging it to pass a resolution to influence an election in a foreign country. To the honor of Congress, it refused thus to degrade itself, and left Mr. Wiman to manipulate his unveiled treason without the aid which he had so unblushingly sought.

The charge of "traitorism" is one which Mr. Wiman has fastened upon himself. In his brochure in your January number, entitled "Can We Coerce Canada?" Mr. Wiman says:

"It should always be borne in mind that the whole body of politics in Canada is permeated through and through with loyalty to the British throne,

for which universal sentiment there is hardly cause for surprise. It must be remembered that Great Britain has treated Canada with the utmost liberality; that the Canadians are a practically self-governing community; and that, in addition to loans of British money in amounts second only to the vast credits given the Argentine Republic, which have recently brought such disaster in financial circles in London, no interference has been made, and nothing but kindness and generosity extended. To contemplate the cessation of a sentiment of loyalty to Great Britain, and to transfer the allegiance of a whole people to her great rival, is simply to contemplate a condition of traitorism that no political party could for one instant afford to assume."

Mr. Wiman boasts that he is a British subject; yet after he had propounded his scheme for commercial union in an address to the Boot and Shoe Club at Boston in January last, when exception was taken to it by Mr. Murray on the ground that it did not insure the annexation of Canada to the United States, the *Boston Herald* of January 22 reports:

"Mr. Wiman briefly replied to the arguments used by Mr. Murray. The speaker urged that, if it was desired to lessen the power of England, that end could not be accomplished better than by Canada trading with the United States and ceasing to trade with Great Britain. 'The very thing Mr. Murray wants to accomplish,' said Mr. Wiman, 'will be better accomplished by the plan I propose than by the plan he proposes.'"

If that is not sufficient, read Mr. Wiman's sworn evidence, page 752 of testimony taken by the Senate commission.

"Suppose your commission should report in favor of unrestricted reciprocity between Canada and the United States; then suppose at the next general election, which takes place within the next eighteen months, the Liberal party, adopting that as the sole plank in their platform, should be returned by a large majority, and Parliament should take on a commercial-union or unrestricted-reciprocity complexion: they would be in control of the government; they would meet your invitation by a vote; that would have to go to England to be consented to by the royal authorities. . . .

"Suppose the English government refused; then the Canadians would be relieved from their fealty, which would be as much a justification for a Boston tea-party as there was in 1776 or prior. . . .

"So that nothing could contribute so much to bring about annexation, if it is thought in the end to be desirable, as to have closer commercial relations."

Brought face to face in the recent campaign with the electors, Sir Richard Cartwright declared that the opposition would not take the United States tariff, and repudiated his own henchman,



Farrer. Mr. Laurier went further and denied that their policy of unrestricted reciprocity involved discrimination against England. But the ugly fact remained that Mr. Wiman, convicted by the letters of Mr. Farrer and Mr. Hitt of being engaged in a treasonable conspiracy to subvert British institutions in Canada, still implored for "moral support" from Congress and the people of the United States for the Laurier-Cartwright party, and the government were sustained by a larger majority than they had at the previous general elections. To complete the discomfiture of the opposition, this was followed by the publication of a letter from the Hon. Edward Blake, one of the most able and respected members of that party, who, rather than bind himself to their policy, had ceased to be their leader, and who now declares that his refusal to go into the battle with them was because he was "unable to fight under false colors." Mr. Blake, who to-day represents the great body of the opposition, who, with few exceptions, are loyal to British institutions, has rudely torn the "mask" to which Farrer alluded from the faces of the conspirators, and the delusion of unrestricted reciprocity may be regarded as dead and buried.

CHARLES TUPPER.